

# Fighting The Legacy Of Lead Paint In New Jersey

## *Governor Christie Builds On New Jersey's Record Of Addressing Lead Paint*

Today, Governor Christie is announcing \$10 million to support an improved lead remediation and containment program for low- and moderate-income households in New Jersey. The funding has been identified within the 2016 budget and will be made available to address lead remediation efforts in a fiscally responsible manner.

- The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will work through non-profit organizations with experience in lead remediation programs to identify licensed lead-evaluation contractors and EPA-certified, lead-safe renovation firms to assess and remediate lead-based paint hazards.
- Eligible units include one- and two-family, low to moderate income owner-occupied and rental units.
- The program will provide up to \$20,000/unit in repair and related costs for eligible households to fund lead remediation and containment.
- The DCA will collect data from homeowners to determine best practices for potential program expansion and refinement.

This improved lead remediation and containment program will operate in addition to the many anti-lead lead programs already in place.

### Lead-Based Paint Exposure in New Jersey

Lead issues in New Jersey stem from remaining lead paint in old housing stock, and it is a problem that has existed in every urban center in the United States for generations. New Jersey has made dramatic progress in addressing this issue over the past 20 years and the State continues to aggressively screen children for lead exposure and work to remediate lead hazards in our communities.

New Jersey is out ahead of the majority of states in regularly and systematically inspecting multi-family housing for lead-based paint hazards. This is enforced through the Hotel and Multiple Dwelling Regulations (NJAC 5:10), which includes enforcement of the requirements for lead-safe maintenance. DCA conducts 200,000 housing inspections annually, spending \$7 million each year to focus on those particular units likely to contain lead paint. Multi-family dwelling require an inspection every five years.

Nearly \$30 million has been spent in support of the lead protection programs since FY 2011, beyond federal funding obtained after Sandy and DCA inspections. Each year, and again this year, the Department of Health provides \$11 million in federal home visitation funds to the Department of Children and Families to support its evidence-based home visitation programs, which bring nurses, community health workers and, in some cases, trained parents into the homes of at-risk families to provide information and referrals on child health and safety issues including strategies to reduce exposures to lead. In FY17 state, Federal and other funding will support DOH, DDD and DCA spending of over \$3 million for various lead protection programs.

The State sought and received approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

(HUD) to use \$5 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery funds to create a Lead Hazard Reduction Program for individuals living in housing units that were flooded by Sandy. The program funds lead assessment and remediation in Sandy-impacted homes, which are potentially at greater risk of lead poisoning threats due to flooding that has caused lead-based paint to flake. This program complements an effort being administered by the New Jersey Department of Health to test young children, pregnant mothers and Sandy recovery workers for blood lead levels, using Social Services Block Grant funding from the federal government. To date, more than 15,300 children, pregnant women and recovery workers in Sandy impacted counties were tested for lead including 9,300 children under 17.

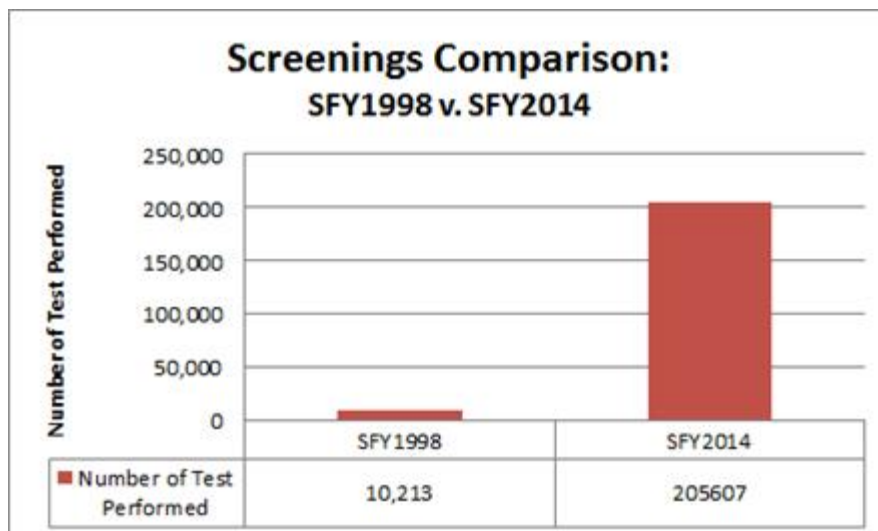
### Screenings For Lead Exposure

Childhood lead poisoning remains an important public health issue in New Jersey, which is why initiatives on controlling lead hazards continue. Enforcement is ongoing of state multiple dwelling rules (NJAC 5:10-6) that emphasize lead-safe maintenance and lead-safe work practices on housing built prior to January 1, 1978.

Over the past 20 years, the number of children screened for lead has increased dramatically while the number of children with elevated blood levels has decreased significantly. This is due to New Jersey's universal lead screening beginning in 1998, public education and prevention efforts over the long term – unleaded gasoline, banning lead paint in homes, and reductions in lead contaminated soil, for example. Screenings for lead exposure have increased 20 fold over the past 20 years while the number of children found with lead poisoning has plummeted.

- New Jersey is one of 17 states that require universal lead screening of all children at ages 1 and 2. Other states target screening only to children at increased risk for lead exposure. New Jersey's approach is far more protective. In State FY 2014, 205,607 children were tested for lead, compared with just 10,200 in 1998.
- In 2015, 898 children had elevated blood lead levels of 10 micrograms per deciliter or higher (the existing state standard), compared with nearly 1,500 children in 1998, even as testing has increased twenty fold.
- 99.6% of the children tested in SFY 2014 had blood lead levels (BLLs) below 10 µg/dL, 837 (0.41%) children had a test result above this threshold (10 µg/dL)
- 97% of New Jersey's children under 6 years of age have had at least one blood lead test in their lifetime.

New Jersey has been a national leader on this issue and our cases have steadily declined.



### Elevated Blood Lead Levels: SFY1998 v. SFY2014

